

The Pipeline

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Medicaid Reorganizes

By Barbara Hadley Smith, CHS Communications



Change has been the name of the game for the Department for Medicaid Services. A five-month reorganization process has restructured the agency to better carry out implementation of Medicaid managed care.

"We recognized that we had to change ourselves if we were to be effective in taking a fee-for-service system to a Medicaid managed care model," said Dennis Boyd, commissioner of the Department for Medicaid Services. "We asked all department staff to participate in designing the new structure, and we emphasized that the result had to be customer friendly."

At the same time the department was being restructured, an extensive renovation project split the department's employees between the third, fourth and sixth floors for more than a year. At times they had to move from one end of the floors to the other and back again to keep out of the way of renovation crews.

The renovation included the removal of wallpaper, the removal of carpeting and new paint and new partitions.

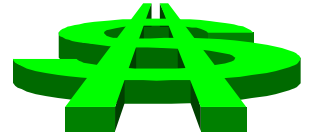
According to one source who refused to be named, "The Medicaid staff were well behaved during the months of transition...for the most part."

Lori Gibson, layout and design coordinator for the project, said, "This has been the fastest and biggest move to take place since my association with the building. During a 30-day period, over 200 people, phones, and personal computers were transferred." Lori works in the Cabinet for Health Services' Purchasing and Operations Management Branch.

Ann Hall, acting branch manager, said she was proud of the way Lori handled the move. Commissioner Boyd also commended her for a job well done. An appreciation luncheon for Lori and other people who assisted with the move was held by the department on March 4.

Finally last month DMS employees settled into refurbished quarters and began to adapt, in many cases, to new assignments. All offices of the department are now on the sixth floor in Human Resources Building.

Electronic Food Stamps Debut



Kentucky's food stamp program is switching from paper to debit cards. Gov. Paul Patton took part in a test run of the new technology March 30 at a Frankfort grocery, while another demonstration of the card was held at a grocery in Midway. The two towns are part of a five-county pilot of the new system, known as electronic benefits transfer (EBT), which will begin May 1.

A Franklin County resident, who is a food stamp recipient, took part in the demonstration, buying groceries for herself and her 3-year-old daughter. "This is a lot more convenient," she said. She added that the new cards, which look like regular credit cards, would also reduce the embarrassment some users now feel when using paper food stamps.

EBT will mean cost-savings to the Cabinet for Families and Children, which administers the food stamp program, and a reduction in theft and fraud. CFC will save up to a million dollars a year in reduced postage and administrative costs now spent on sending out stamps every month, said Secretary Viola Miller. The cards will accept food items only, but alcoholic beverages, tobacco and other ineligible items will be rejected, and no change will be given. Theft will be less appealing because the cards require use of personal identification numbers. Anyone can use paper food stamps with no identification.

EBT will be introduced in May in Anderson, Woodford, Fayette, Franklin, and Shelby counties, where approximately 7,400 families now receive food stamps. The entire state is expected to be in the EBT system by November. About 165,000 families receive food stamps statewide.

Thirty states already use the EBT system. The federal government is requiring all states to implement the system by 2002.

Pipeline, a weekly newsletter for employees of the Cabinets for Families and Children and Health Services, welcomes reader comments and contributions. Items for *Pipeline* are due by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday; items for intercom announcements are due by 4:30 p.m. Monday. Call (502) 564-6786 or send information to Patricia Loman at Patricia.Boler@mail.state.ky.us.

Secretaries' Week Activities

By Ronnie Dunn – CFC Employee Services



It's once again that time of year when we recognize the supportive efforts of our administrative and secretarial staff. Professional Secretaries Week will be observed April 19-23, 1999. The following activities in are available Frankfort:

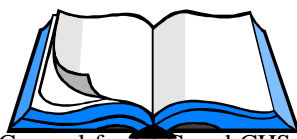
Wednesday, April 21 (Professional Secretaries Day)

Annual Conference to celebrate Professional Secretaries Week will be held at the Holiday Inn Capital Plaza Hotel. Sponsored by Franklin County Community Education, this annual event includes excellent workshops, lunch, and the awards ceremony for the 1999 Secretary of the Year. Supervisors may want to consider paying the \$40 registration fee (due April 16, 1999) for staff to attend (or \$15 for lunch only). Registration for the workshops begins at 8:30 AM, and lunch will be served at noon. The keynote speaker this year is Judge Ray Corns. For further information, registration form and a nomination form for Secretary of the Year Award (due April 19), you may call 875-1481.

Thursday, April 22 – 9:00-11:00 AM

Annual Briefing for Administrative Professionals, featuring Joan Lunden. This program will be brought to the Distance Learning Center on the third floor of the Health Services Building via satellite. The theme of this event is "change" and the seminar centers on the role of administrative staff as they assume expanding responsibilities. Room capacity is 35; you may register to attend by calling Sandy Williams at 564-4990.

Book 'Em!



Office of the General Counsel for CFC and CHS is missing some books from its law library, and is willing to grant complete amnesty for a limited time for their return.

Counsel wants to continue making the law library and its resources available to all employees, but will restrict access if the problem continues. Legal staff's efforts in their research projects are often frustrated when law volumes are missing from the library.

Removal of resources from the law library area is not permitted, but if you did "borrow" something and "accidentally forgot" to return it, this is your chance to avoid having the book thrown at you.



Tax Forms Fast



Do you need tax forms fast? All 1998 Kentucky individual income tax forms are available on the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet's Web site, <http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/revenue>, or from *TaxFax*, KRC's fax-on-demand system.

TaxFax allows callers with touch-tone telephones and fax machines to receive forms immediately. The call does not have to be made from the fax machine which will receive the forms. Call 502- 564-4459 from any touch-tone phone to use *TaxFax*. Up to three documents may be ordered per call.

The KRC Web site also offers a direct link to the IRS, where federal tax forms can be downloaded.

Central Office Notes and Activities



- ◆ Nominations for **CFC Employees of the Month** are due by the 15th of each month. For more information, or to submit a nomination, contact Charlene Nation of the Employee Services Branch, CHR-5, phone 564-7770. She will also accept nominations sent by e-mail.

- ◆ Linda Burke, a nursing supervisor with Public Health, is starting a **Fibromyalgia Support Group**. Everyone who has this illness or knows someone who does is invited to participate. A meeting is scheduled for **April 15 at 7 p.m. at Highland Christian Church** on Versailles Road. For more information, call Linda Burke at 4-7213.

- ◆ **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.** Blue ribbons will be displayed and worn throughout April as a visible symbol of the victims of child abuse, and Blue Ribbon Day at the Capitol on April 1 will kick off activities marking Child Abuse Prevention Month

- ◆ The **aerobics program** meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 5 p.m. in the cafeteria. Call Beth Bates at 564-7736 for more information.

- ◆ There has been a **change in the date** for the annual March of Dimes fundraiser, **Walk America**. State employees will walk May 21; not April 16 as was previously reported. Plan now to participate.

- ◆ Reminder: the **elevators should be vacated** during **emergency evacuations**, except for those employees or visitors with disabilities. Everyone possible should use the escalators and stairs.

- ◆ **Kentucky Employees Credit Union** would like to announce its **upcoming annual meeting**. This year's meeting will be held in the Health Services auditorium on **Tuesday, April 20 at 12:00 p.m.** All members are encouraged to attend. **The credit union will be closed from 11:45 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. during the meeting.**